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AIRGRAM

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State.

INFO: CINCSO FOR POLAD, Amembassies TEGUCIGALPA, SAN SALVADOR,
MANAGUA, SAN JOSE, DOD

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT : Weekly Internal Security Report

REF :

DATE: July 29, 67

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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INTELLIGENCE AFFAIRS

1. It was a full and a bloody week but for the most part it looked as if the guerrillas were continuing to lie low. The bulk of the activity seemed to be the work of either the security forces, their clandestine urban arm or the armed civilians in the countryside. Most of the action this week took place either in the capital, where the police continue to be keeping the insurgents under constant pressure, and in the departments of Zacapa and Chiquimula.

2. A surprise this week was the news of an army clash with a group of guerrillas in the town of Jones, Zacapa, on July 22. Four of the guerrillas were killed and two fled. The military suffered no casualties. While Jones had been one of the centers of guerrilla activity in the past, as in other areas of Izabal and Zacapa, it had slid down to almost nothing in recent months. It is likely that the July 22 encounter does not signal a return to significant guerrilla activity in the area but simply a chance encounter with one of the scattered groups known to be holding out.

3. Other incidents which received considerable press and public attention were the assassination of Ing. Eduardo Sosa Montalvo in Zone 1 of the capital on July 23, the capture of five alleged guerrillas and the killing of one by National Police in the capital on July 21, the discovery of an arms cache in a concealed pit under the floor of a house in the colony of El Milagro in the capital, and the bombing with incendiary bombs of the house of leftist PR Deputy Luis Jorge Campollo y Campollo at his finca near Barberena, Santa Rosa, on July 27. Damage was estimated at Q30,000.

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4. A number of people were reported abducted. They were not rich and in most cases they were probably taken for political motives. The Deputy Mayor of La Puente, Dept. of Chiquimula, and his 2 brothers were among those taken but they escaped with only severe beatings. They were released later near Huité, Zacapa.

5. There were also the usual bodies which appeared to have met death for political reasons - 12 this week.

6. Comment: Although the level of bloodshed and violence was high, it did not depart from the pattern of recent weeks, and public concern was not unduly aroused. All evidence points to the fact that the guerrillas are quiet as much through necessity as design. They are reported to be very short on funds and weapons, and morale is low. An important contributing factor to this last phenomena is the continued success of the security forces. They effectively use information gained in one raid to stage yet another, and the guerrillas are kept on the defensive and on the move.

7. A disturbing condition is the continued if not increasing activity of what from reports would appear to be fairly numerous groups of armed bands operating in the countryside, particularly in the Departments of Zacapa and Chiquimula. Some of them may simply be bands of common criminals, but others are undoubtedly groups armed by the Army to combat the guerrillas. They are mostly far rightists from MLN, and now that the guerrilla threat has been significantly reduced, they seem to be casting around for other targets they consider markedly to the left of themselves. There are indications that local PR leaders sometimes fall into this category. Examples this week could include the beating of the mayor of La Puente and his 2 brothers (see above), and possibly the shooting of Comisionados Militares near Olopa, Department of Chiquimula (see list of incidents) although details are lacking. The Embassy is following this situation very closely.

8. Incidents during the week in chronological order were:

July 20 - Two bodies found near Quezaltepequez, Dept. of Chiquimula. They were identified as Pablo Javier Aguirre and his son Delisario Javier Aguirre. They had been shot numerous times by 45 caliber bullets. According to press, they had been captured July 13 by about 10 armed men from the finca San Diego, Concepción Las Minas. No political motive known.

21 - Body found in Dos Cruces, Dept. of Zacapa. Body was in nylon sack. Had been dead about five days. No political identification.

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July 21 - Press reports police foil attempt to abduct wealthy industrialist Estuardo Novella. Four were reported captured: Rafael Castellon Raldo, Albino Castellon Ralda, Jose Fraterno Reyes Monzon, and Rudy Reyes Monzon. [REDACTED] 31

- One guerrilla killed and 6, including a women, captured after chase near La Florida in Zone 19 of the capital. They are thought to be responsible for the death of a policeman in the attack on Chanel 3 and a bombing in Zone 11, July 20.

22 - Br. Hugo René Sagastume was taken from his home in Zone 10 of the capital by armed men according to his wife. Embassy has no details but he is known to Embassy as a communist.

- Army patrol kills 4 guerrillas and 2 flee in clash in Jones, Dept. of Zacapa. No military casualties. [REDACTED] B

- Two bodies found in Palencia, Dept. of Guatemala. Both had signs of having been tortured before death. No political identification.

23 - Body found in Zone 6 of capital. Had been shot 4 times. No political identification.

- Presumed student, Alejandro Alvarado Meza, found dead in Quezaltenango. According to a paper found in his pocket, he had been killed by a subversive group and press speculates this was in fact the case, adding it is not the first such case in Quezaltenango. [REDACTED]

o/a 23 - Suspected terrorist captured by authorities near Moyuta, Dept. of Jutiapa. He was identified as Hector Enrique Larón, a Salvadoran national. He is specifically accused of manufacturing bombs. No more known.

o/a 23 - Band of machinegun-armed, uniformed men raided several homes near Esquipulas, Dept. of Chiquimula, making off with unknown quantity of money. According to press, there have been other similar incidents in area.

- Ten uniformed men armed with machineguns abducted Deputy Mayor of town of La Puente, Dept. of Chiquimula, José Antonio Rivas and his two brothers. They were taken from their homes, badly beaten, and abandoned near Huité, Dept. of Zacapa, some hours later. Press speculate they were victims of terrorist bands reported operating in area.

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July 23 - Police captured arms cache in cave under floor of house in colony El Milagro in Zone 19, of the capital. Haul included 14 sub-machineguns, rifles, grenades, dynamite, and other armaments, as well as subversive literature. Lorenzana Castellanos taken in raid as suspected guerrilla.

- Press reports Eduardo Sosa Montalvo shot from motorcycle in Zone 1 of capital. He fired back but attackers fled. Sosa Montalvo died in hospital few hours later. [REDACTED] 131

24 - Body in advanced state of decay found in Rio Hondo. He had been shot. No political identification.

o/a 25 - Press reports that Guatemala guerrillas helped four South American criminals, who had escaped from a Mexican jail, escape and cross the border into Guatemala. Details vague.

26 - Two bodies with gunshot wounds found between Siquinalá and Santa Lucía Cotzumalguapa, Dept. of Escuintla. They were identified as Epifanio Curriales and Simón Lucas Curriales. No political motive known.

- Bus driver, Francisco Javier Antón, taken from bus in capital by group armed with side arms. Motive unknown.

o/a 26 - Two Commisionados Militares shot and killed near Olopa, Dept. of Chiquimula. There are conflicting reports as to how incident occurred.

27 - Three incendiary bombs thrown at house of PR Congressional Deputy Luis Jorge Campollo y Campollo at his finca near Barberena, Dept. of Santa Rosa. House was almost total loss. Motives unknown.

- Two bodies found in Zone 7. They showed signs of having been beaten. They were not identified and no motive for their death is known.

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